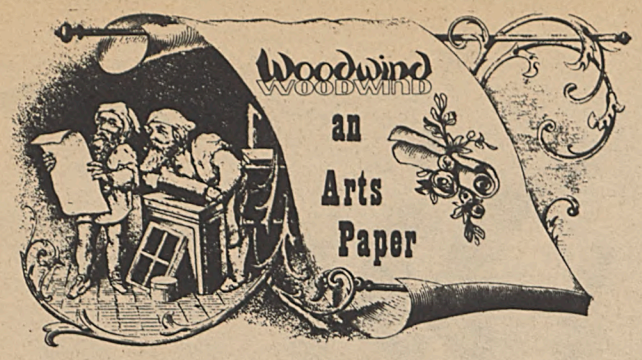
# Woodwind

AN ARTS PAPER WASHINGTON, D.C. FREE

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VOLUME III
Number 8

February
8
1972

# We're 2 years old

The centerfold is a tribute to Kenneth Patchen prepared for us by our former editor Richard Harrington. This is our eighth issue since he left the paper, we hope we have been carrying on the ideals with which he started

THANK YOU EVERYONE

## STAFF

Patty Pearson, John Burgess, Ned Chaillet, Judy Willis, Deidre Baldwin, Tom Horne, Washington Reviewing Society, Bruce Rosenstein, Mike Snyder, Mike Schreibman, Tim Healey.

CONTRIBUTERS THIS ISSUE

Kirk Cheyfitz, Kelly, Bill Holland, Mary Ann La Roche, Richard Harrington, Christine Duewel, Robert Palmer, Susan Cohn, Tina Dassoulas Ann Auberjonois Mary Ellen Kelliher Peggy Goodheart

COVER BY: Lanny Tupper

We asked Lanny to bake us a birthday cake for our second birthday, naturally he ate the first piece.

WOODWIND is a community oriented arts paper, and in being so one of our primary functions is to publish new local artists and writers. If you are interested in having your work published please mail it in or give us a call. We are particularly interested in fiction, art reviews and short features. Poetry is not ruled out, but we have a huge backlog.

JOAN BAEZ

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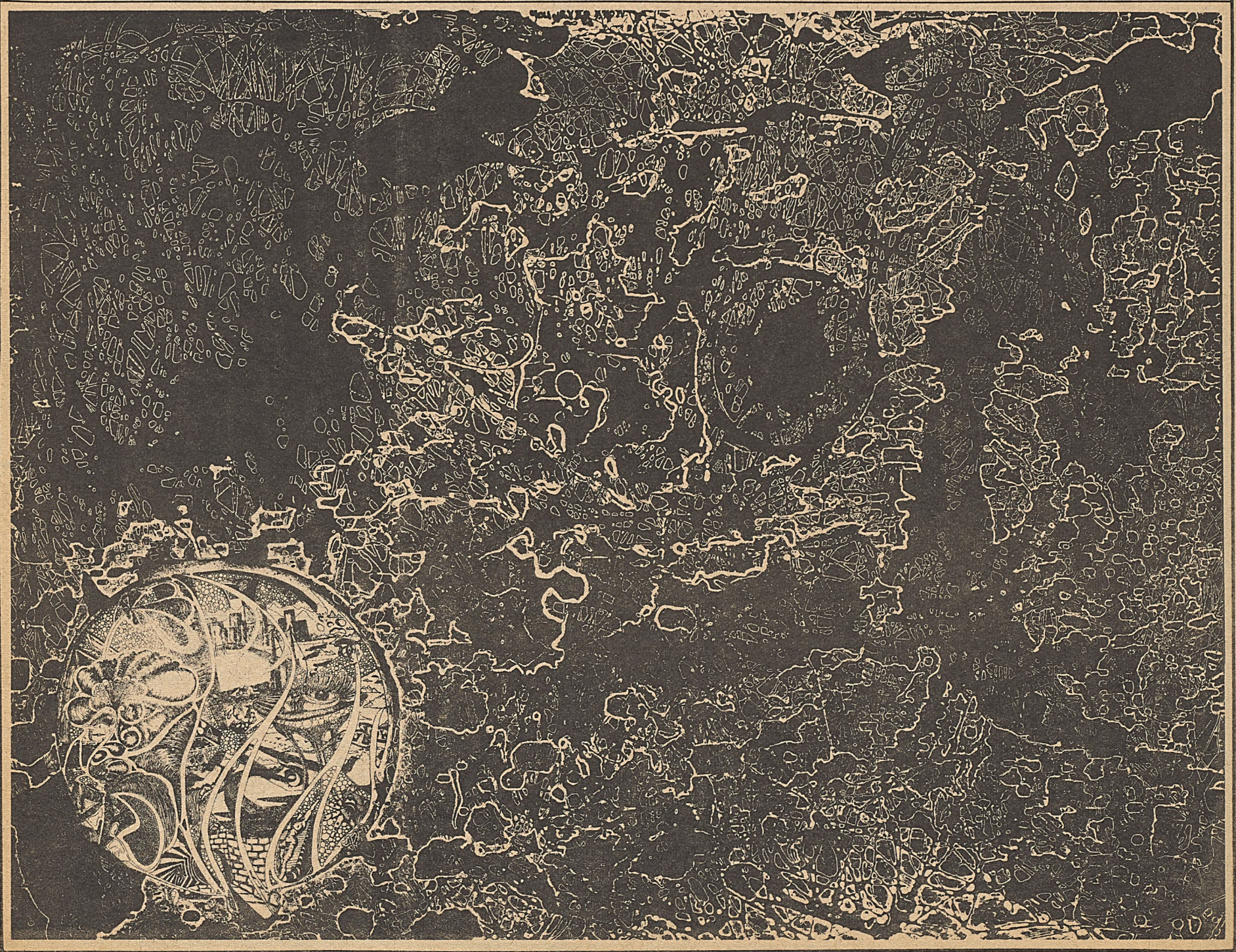
# for Rachel in the Rain

In February, rain commenced to fall solidly, every day, almost every hour. It rained constantly when we looked past the curtains at the street. The thick rain frosted up in sheets from the asphalt and the cars swished through my dreams. Rain fell in the mornings after my wife stole the car and I had to run with Rachel under my arm around the corner, the rain dancing in puddles as I dodged the people waiting for the bus, ran past the iron fence and was going downstairs to the cellar of the neon baptist church where my child stayed in white isolation with the children of the ghetto. Rain fell, as I ran for congressional cover across the park and through the Capitol Grounds to the Longworth Building where I wrote speeches and carried on long, enigmatic conversations with my lawyers and detectives and potential, but wavering, witnesses. There was a stone horse with a stone rider in this park, as in every park in Washington, but I never read his inscription, running past his green arrested plunge for cover under the trees from the rain.

At night, when I ran home, rain poured from drain spouts and obscured doorways and people loomed more than they approached. When I reached Rachel, just as the Taft Bell was croaking its six bass clangs (if I was lucky), it was already pitch-dark and Rachel was whiney and complaining in expectation of our run through the rain. But it was fun. She always burst out laughing halfway home on the run in the rain. Then, bursting in upon where we lived, we dripped all over Goodwill Industries' legless couches and scruffy rugs and I popped a meatpie in for her dinner and while it cooked we lined up her blocks like a train, she okaying the final removal of her wraps when they lay straight, just so, in a line.

Then Rachel slept, while I sat in the darkness, hearing the rain, slow, fearing a break-in should it totally let up and the gangs come out on the street, seeing a darkened window I was too poor to light.

-- David Wham



# Poetry

## four poems by Roger Nickles

A grey sky hung behind the fall trees
Waiting for the sun
To burn off the morning fog.
Watching from tje window
The distance was accomplished
By peeling away the layers.
A mystery hand pushed aside
The thickness of fog
Uncovering the golden tree forms.

Among the dried leaves
Mushroons poked their caps
Toward the sun shafts
That seem to support the trees.
And if you matched closely
You could see them growing,
Their soundless movement,
Easing their rounded domes,
Lightly brown-grey speckled,
Up.
Their cluster was a broken circle.
Some tried to claim the same foothold.
They reminded me of nothing
But, they heeded me not
Nor set about to change me.
Perhaps it was their tolerance.

Fall days are rusty reminders of summer
Caught in the branches of trees.
Mushroom capers and butterfly frolics
Wood sounds changing
Rippling the pond of water
Patterns of the wind
Fish bubbles break on the surface
And water-beatle ballet
Skim the reflected side-scapes.
Fall snuggles under
The patchwork leaf quilt
Ready for the down flake white ' nfort of winter
Chipmunk and squirrel have scampered
Storing away the acorn of the oak.
Quietly the warm colors fade
Into the soft white silence
That will give birth to the
Spectacle of spring.

Do you hear the quiet sounds of autumn leaves?
They are bright colors cut of tissue
Rushing against the branches
And gliding to the moss carpet.
The glade filled with this comforting spectacle
Splashing colors showered down
Lifting my spirits to the highest form
Giving over to those around
Caring for you openly
Not knowing why
Not wanting to.
Bringing to you the essence of life.
The nowhere of the being settles around us
Capturing, holding in, freeing the other.
Let me wald alone in the autumn sounds and dream.

the undernourished foreign child on tv learned
to like  to loveif we're to judge from grins
to marvel at and be enchanted by
jello
which wiggled when
he hit it with his spoon
we learned, because we are not undernourished
to love The distant dream od sexual union
to bed with Spiritual Love from Cool Hello
elusive Happiness
enough & soon

perpetually soon--

i call a big girl love, but she's
accustomed to her extra weight and height
& several ounces of gristle and childhood probing for
an answer to a godlike itch
can't mean that much
to her-- she puts a gook face on & moves
as her dream, which mau have been clear air on snow,
or naked trees on night, or light on eye -, -
it may have been a child, a twitch in time, but it
was never  lovely lovely jello--
as such--

these walls are made of years.
they keep out all the singing lights
of innocence.  they contain the bokies of nights
filled with pointless tears.

& in more or less neat rhymes
our sorrows are boxed.
we are outrun
by form.  we are always outrun by form.

CHORUS: because the dealer sometimes loses,
but the house it always wins.

show me where the heels of light
were defined by years as swamp gas
& i will tell you home-place thoughts:

where the best climbing trees are & where
the paths through the grass lead quail up,
the odor of memory's body in me head's lair

or else, if you're persistant, & love me, i might
lead you to where the tree was
where i hanged the last of my new threads

& began to live on the edge of town,
& began to make it with women, & drink sweet wime,
& live as a shadow, & sing a hand-me-down

me as blues:
pity self in third person sing
ular --
much of what
is valid becometh less
in translation
to tears, for we'uns fears
jubilations
& suicide.  i guess
we rot
quiet,
like a green faulkner thing
screws
its southness.

# From :

# KINDER-

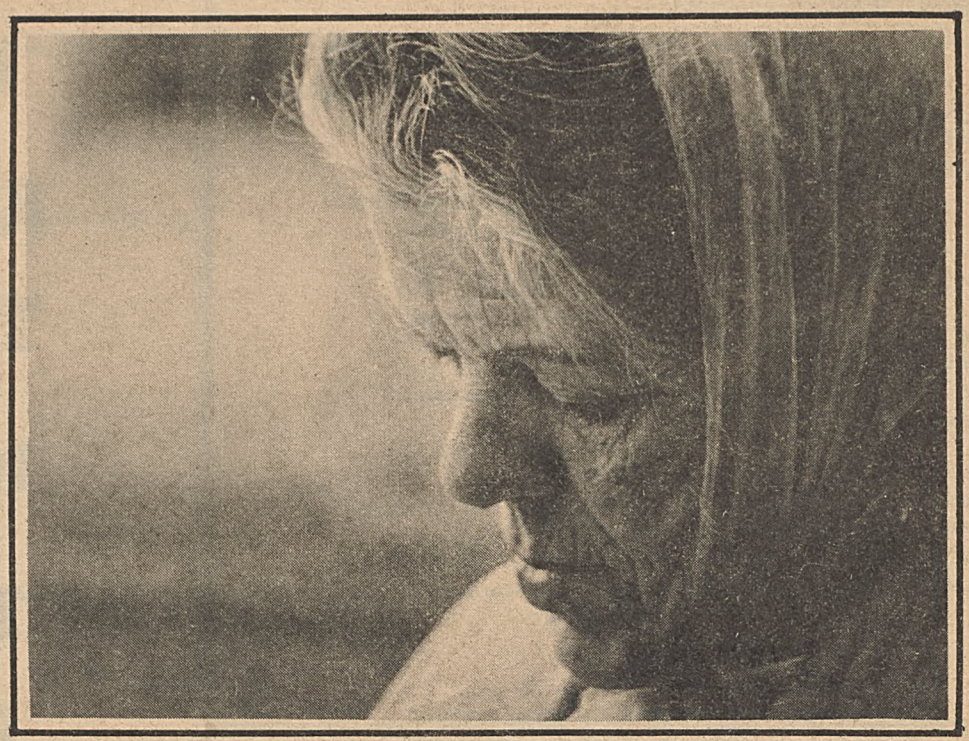
# TOTENLEIDER

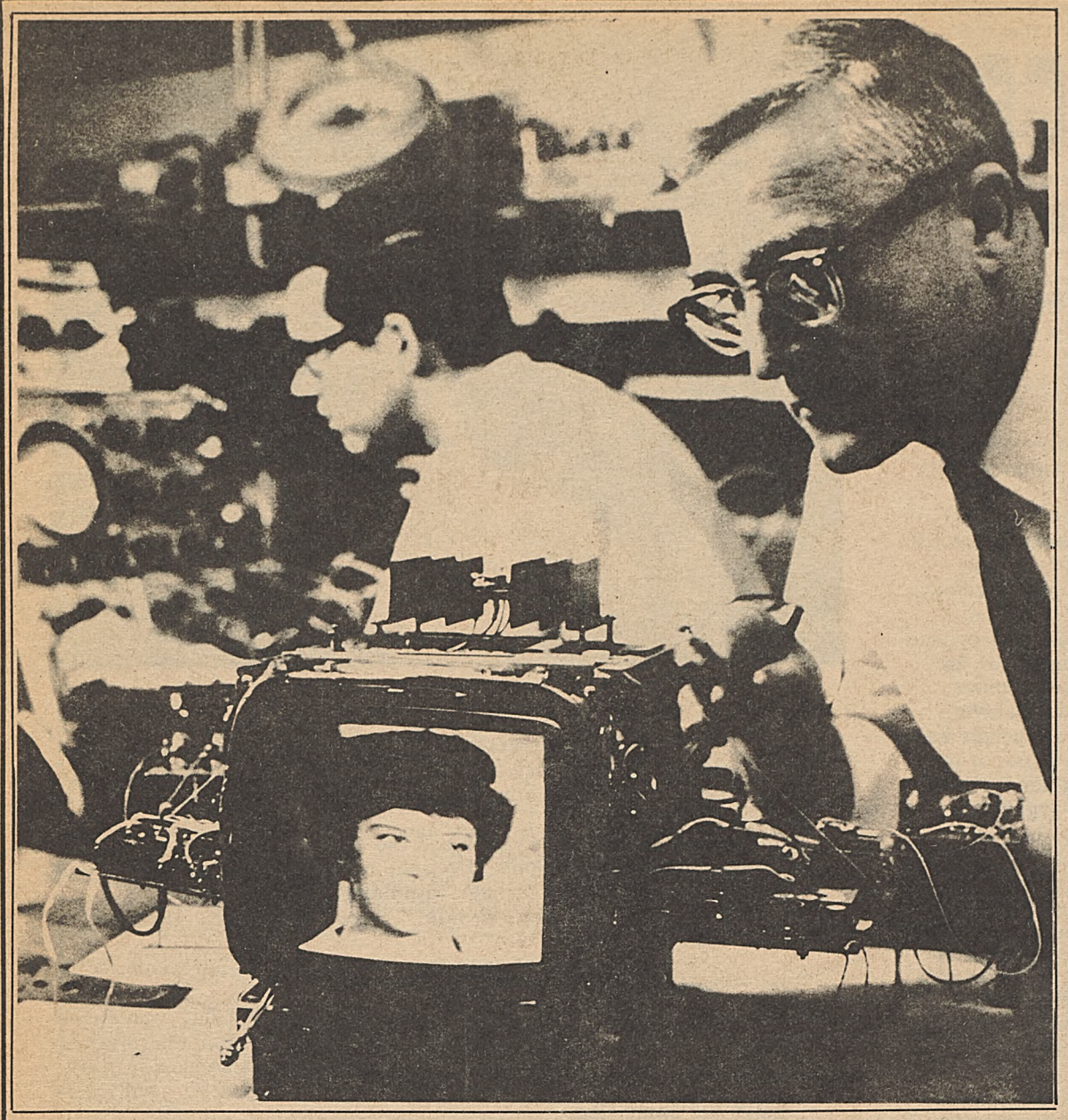
# by

# Paul

# Grant

# PHOTOS by Jeff Nuttle





# pssstt !

# you wanna little hi in your boob tube fi ?

by william holland

Ever since Elvis first appeared on television, up to Dylan on the first Johnny Cash Show and Harrison's recent guest shot on the Cavett Show, I've been trying to hook up my television so it would provide some sort of decent sound.

Like an oysterman vainly searching for pearls 'tween the grime of Chesapeake oyster shells, I have hoped that there might be some miraculous discovery to give truth to the rumor that television audio signals are indeed capable of being high fidelity.

Sad grail questor that I am, I have not been all that successful, but on occassion, depending on the set I happened to have around, I have had some luck.

And, as it was told, if FM can provide wide frequency

Because, you see, I believe. Like a faithful pilgrim, I have heard testimony which revealed that the audio wavelength for television sound is -- yes! -- as close to the FM high fidelity radio bands as popsicle halves.

And, as it was told, if FM can provide wide frequency response with no static or interference, TV sound should bring it all home, too, right?

Well.....yes. In theory. But, in terms of actual tubes and speakers and stuff that is stuffed into TV sets, nope.

In spite of the constant standard for excellence that American television makers have awed the world with, the fact is that there is not one commercial set on the market that has an audio amplifier of enough sophistication, frequency range and wattage to produce sound one iota better than your typical cheapo breakfast table AM radio. And in fact, most are worse.

Now, given that most of you readers possess only a portable TV (don't make me go into that; just go along with me here) with a sound system somewhere around the quality of a beach party transistor radio, time comes when you might first ask why and then what can be done, if anything, to remedy this abysmal lack of fidelity.

Why so lousy? The answer I always get from appliance salesmen, hi-fi store employees and repairmen is: You, dear reader.

Youse guys -- the consumers -- don't give a shit and so why should the manufacturers? A statement and a question belligerent and defensive, to be sure, and if I may be allowed a bit of smugness, a bit transparent in its irrationality, too, eh what?

True, perhaps, 90 percent of TV owners in this country probably never give it a thought, but how about those among the population who are music lovers, hi fi nuts, electronics perfectionists, and, last but not least, those entrepreneurs who believe in the basic assumption of free enterprise: A good gimmick (like good sound) is a dollar in the pocket?

Hah-hah, you agree, ho-ho! Ah yes, how about us? Well, remember that minorities in this country are treated with a percentage of competency (if not compassion) that is directly proportional to their percentage amount, etc., etc. In other words, you get about a dime's worth of service for your dollar-standard humanity. Unless of course, you raise some hell and then there's all those problems involved in Bozos rocking the Big Biz Boat.

Well, as I asked earlier, what can be done about it all? Can the average person take things into his own hands? Is it possible to find hi fi trapped in an electronic tiger cage deep in your TV chassis? Can it be released?

Sort of. See, most of the trouble is the cheapo audio amp and mini-speaker in your good-looking set. Get around that and you might be able to get medium-fi, at least. Bypass the speaker, or, better yet, the speaker and the amp and your ear might pick up a decent signal and turn from tin to stainless steel, if not gold.

What to do? Well, get your electronic whiz friend (everybody knows at least one) to locate your TV speaker. Have him string some wires from the speaker to an "auxiliary high input" on the back of you hi fi stereo amp. (I hesitate to bring stereo into this because TV, of course, is monaural.) There! Sumptuous low-mid fi. Sounds just like your family's old hulking 1951 Magnavox, right?

So, "Heeeere's Johnny" will no longer come out sounding like a squawking tweet but, instead, a woof. But at least you'll have some bass.

How to add tweet to the woof is another matter. Ask you electronics nut friend to locate the volume pot of your set. There meet the wires that go into the amp. Actually, there's usually three wires two of them audio and one a ground. Have your friend vasectomize the little mother and then hook those signal-throbbing babies to your good amp. The "low input" this time, I think, although you'd best double check that.

What comes out this time should be mid-fi. Enough to give you some indication of what television sound could be.

However. Due to dreary decades of being overlooked and ignored, audio engineers in television today usually don't even bother setting up audio balances in the studio that would produce high fidelity So, right off you're working with a body with a few screws loose, as it were.

If, by some momentary lapse in mediocrity, a good bit of audio does make it on the airwaves, I'm afraid the manner in which the waves are carried is also bound to take the hi out of the fi, as well.

The audio experts I mentioned earlier tell me that the cables, carrier cables, I believe, that transport the TV station signals, are made by our cherished Ma Bell, who, as anybody knows, makes the lowest of fidelity telephones. (Ever try to play a friend a record over the telephones? A frustrating experience to be sure.)

Anyway, these babies just don't have the capacity to carry all those heavy low frequencies and those fragile uppermost ones, and by the time it gets to Phoenix, or Boston or Washington or anywhere, much of the woof and tweet leaked out of the signal.

Pretty dismal, eh? Might even make you not bother. Well, take heart.

If you like some fidelity, if you would like to hear an actual voice overtone, or the sizzle of a cymbal -- not all, but some, at least -- then try to modify your set. You will even be able to hear bass notes!

WARNING: That printing on the back of your set about high voltage danger is not jive. Do not attempt to probe the set's innards yourself, including snipping those wires around the volume pot. You can attach wires from the speaker and not get hurt, but otherwise, let your watts-and-ohm buddy do the dirty work.

An aesthetic warning, too: Once you modify your set you'll probably have hum trouble. See, hum, aurally speaking, is a 60 cycle-per-second tone, which is a very low note. That note, and its overtones, are automatically abolished from cheapo TV sound which doesn't get anywhere near that low. Naturally, TV manufacturers haven't spent the money -- a few cents per set -- to block out the hum. So, your friend will have to deal with that, too.

Ah, but after you get all that done, what pleasure! Just think of the groovy airchecks you can tape! Stuff that'll never come out on a record. Go ahead. Give it a try. And write letters, too.

# performance

## ned chaillet

CHE -- A PERMANENT TRAGEDY By Mataya Beckovic and Dusan Radovic

at Theatre Lobby

MY JUDGEMENT as to whether you should see this play or not is of little value. It depends on your political stance, your theatrical acumen, your demands of a performance. I'll describe it, make a few unavoidable judgements and a few avoidable ones and try to give you the gist of the total performance.

This sort of theatre is unusual in Washington, but not unknown. It consists of a concept that makes more of the performance itself than of the text, so that any relevations must come to you through the mise-en-scéne, not through the too brief, contradictory words.

Washington theatregoers may have seen the Kreeger's production of Ionesco's Wipe-Out Games, in which time and again the fact of a plague is swept upon the audience through a series of scenes bound together only by the dying of the victims. This Yugoslavian play, in its American premiere, also speaks of victims, though many of its victims are heroes in this normal world we view from, if not in the play. For the play has no heroes. Che can be a hero, or a villain, but only outside the context of this anti-heroic argument.

Che -- A Permanent Tragedy is not about Che, but about tragedy, the tragedy of heroism, the tragedy of conflict, the tragedy of the struggle of ideology against ideology. Again, like Ionesco, the play argues apolitically for every point of view, from every point of view. If we are to make a decision on the basis of this play's meaning, we must search outside the context of the play for its greater context. It is a play from a Communist country, about a Communist revolutionary. It is being presented in a bourgeois experimental theatre. It is being performed by largely bourgeois performers, and viewed largely by bourgeois audiences, albeit, with some radical thoughts occasionally visited upon the performance.

There is little evidence of sexism in this production, the director, Mark Mason, has avoided much use of the traditional roles of women for short cut identifications and it helps the production. The play argues against machismo politics, and if it had been presented as a machismo male dominated performance, the play would have been entirely devoid of meaning.

Characters in the play are not identified and are hopelessly interchangeable. The nine performers, Margo Barnett, Richard De Angelis, David Lawrence Eastman, and Brian Griffin with Richard Harmel, Walker Hicklin, Carol Ann Dessler, Rebecca Read, and Clifford Smith, are all more or less capable of the demands put on them, but they are obviously not an ensemble company and do not always function in the terms of the group. Putting together a group of this nature by open casting calls for a limited run production has its drawbacks and I question whether it can be done to the advantage of the production.

TO BEGIN WITH, the play opens before it opens with the now common out-front warm-ups and exercises in front of the audience. This means to involve the audience has become common since the controversial Dionysus In 69 and the American tour of the Living Theatre in 1968-69. But it is most often, as here, used wrongly. There must be a reason for the audience to see these exercises. They must either build toward the performance or create an environment which will prepare the audience for its relationship with the performers.

The cast of Che simply drifts on stage and, with no unification plunges into traditional limbering up and dance exercises. Their attitudes are convivial, genial and even cheerful, which is nice, but their exercises seem sort of pointless in front of an audience. It looks like a gym class, especially since there is no discipline in most of the exercises, and some of the performers had to be taught the exercises in front of the audience.

Following the exercises, the cast exits, leaving the theatre suddenly a dead space. After awhile, players quietly enter and sit, or lie or lean on the floor. Waiting.

A player passes a simple white cross to each performer. The reclining bodies clutch at the crosses. A miniature graveyard suddenly fills the performing space, a severely limited vista that manages to suggest a battlefield graveyard, the endless expanse of American dead in European graves. Then even the lights die.

At the theatre entrance a spotlight pinpoints a man delivering a large black cross. "Who asked for this?" he asks. A delivery man with no where to deliver his cross. He leaves, but not forever. Like "The cradle endlessly rocking" in Intolerance this delivery man will continue to appear until he finds his crucifixated martyr.

Electric music next stirs the performance and slides flash across the screens of the theatre revealing war dead, newspaper headlines, military men, a survivor of a Nazi concentration camp, church men. Under this barrage of ideological military madness, the dead moan and clutch their crosses, seeking to ward off the vampiric madness above them. Both vampires and victims continue to flash on the screens: Lt. Calley, the Kennedy's, Oswald, Angela Davis.

Then mortal reactions from this graveyard. "I'm not guilty! I want to live!" cries a man. Then another voice: "I hate life. I hate facts. Save me. It's a hostile world we live in." They are dressed now, the actors, in fragments of military uniforms. They philosophize about their guilt, about the guilt of others, about innocence. "Maybe there's an innocent living underground, who's been there for centuries. Waiting."

They rise, these actor-enthusiasts, move by the screens, then address the audience directly: "Instead of changing yourself, you thought you'd change the world." But this audience, all of us? I think not.

Again the delivery man and the cross, and no one will admit to seeking this martyrdom. Even the cast leaves as he enters, only to return in a carnival manner with bells and costumes.

"Causes! Causes for sale!" cries the hawker. "Secrets!" cries another.

"I'd give my right hand for a just cause," a performer tells us. "Secrets!", someone yells.

In the pandemonium there is a struggle for a flag, the same flag with one side claiming one meaning for it, another claiming another meaning. "Long live the flag of freedom!" a supporter yells. "That's not what our flag stands for!" yells an opponent. But it remains the same flag.

"Opium for the masses!" someone calls. An oriental gong strikes.

Then the cast is on the floor, listening through the floor to the voices of the dead. A journey with Ulysses to the region of the dead, an odyssey. The voices of the dead mingle with voices of the living and the performers are confused. "We can't tell who's dead and who's alive!"

And the dead pass overhead on the screens, while a funeral wreath arrives to funeral music. The Kennedy's spin over the screens, and a black podium is placed in the stage area.

From a hat tree, the performers pick hats, assuming, apparently, the various personalities of various speakers. Then, invoking memories of heroic days, the speakers ask us, a day, a month at a time, to remember the valiant sacrifice of any day, any week, any month, any year. "Never forget...Long live...Remember the victims of...March, September, October, November, July 3, April 1, May 34." It becomes a litany of the sacrifices to causes, a litany of the days of the calendar.

After a non-intermission with a lit theatre and no performers, a cheering crowd throngs the stage bearing "protest" signs, the strangest collection of protest signs I've ever seen, asking for such things as "Hippy Power" and also such standbys as "Freedom". A speaker exhorts the crowd to believe that the forces of power hide the truth from the people, "And the people know nothing about it", is his refrain. The cheering crowd and the speaker are separated and beaten by a police unit that enters.

"Confess that you're happy." orders an official as the speaker is tortured. "Confess that you're free." The bully-boy police force transforms into a Weatherman-FBI brigade and a voice somewhere says, "Forgive us."

Martial music blares out and a close-order drill team performs inspiring rifle drill while shouting cadences about The Bullet. "The bullet, a pain killer, cure for headaches."

Again the cross is brought on, again, no takers, and electronic music and screen abstractions preceed an umbrella invasion, as all the performers enter carring opened umbrellas, creating some sort of underground, underwater environment where they meet each other in chance encounters during random bumpings together. And in even this ephemeral world a struggle for the flag occurs.

"They're stealing our flag," someone calls. "Our best comrads died for this flag," someone explains. And the struggle goes on.

But not all martyrs can be martyrs in this vision of Beckovic and Radovic, and a woman rabble-rouser enters, carring her own hanging rope. "I am an agitator," she announces, "hang me please." And no one will respond.

"Down with the exploiters!" she calls. "Down with the elephants!" someone finally says. "Blacker coffee!" comes another demand, and the agitator becomes a martyr with no martyrdom, mocked by those she would lead to salvation.

Another break, another non-intermission with a chattering audience, then a blue screen and a pink screen, a red carpet, a table with a tin can on it, and a Pancho Villa guerilla takes a position by the door. A decorated Latin American general steps to the table and introduces us to the tin can.

"This is Che Quevera," he tells us. "This is his heart...his tongue...his Das Kapital ...his fatigues...in these ashes. Here he is in person."

The protagonist has finally made his entrance, in a can, no-

thing remaining. The peasant he came to liberate wants nothing more than his can back, the can that holds his liberator. The general laughs. The themes are restated in new and old words:

"We killed a man who came for his bullet."

"No heroes!"

"Working class men made up Hitler's Gestapo."

"This can't go on. I'm guilty, hang me!" cries a last hero, assuming, as at the beginning, the guilt of the world and the guilt of killing Che, and, one would assume, the guilt of Che.

The can containing Che passes to a guerillere, whose words are a new litany thanking the generals for killing Che, for providing a new martyr, for allowing the killing to continue by killing.

"It took a century to give birth to one man," the General maintains, perhaps assuming the killing of Che has ended the revolution that truly began with his death. But the depth of his vision is seen as no more and no less than the depth of all ideological justifications. Once again, the play pounds us with slogans.

"There are deaths more valuable than lives."

"We will defeat victory."

"Down with happiness. Long live hope."

"GO HOME. YOU KNOW EVERYTHING."

"Don't hope. There is no hope. Hope is abolished."

And then, a final visit from the delivery man, who promises us a permanent tragedy of Martyrdom. Leaving the cross with the audience, he says, "If you don't want it, somebody else will. There is no use postponing it."

We fade away from the performance beneath a pounding amplified heartbeat as a last performer, clutching the can that is the mortal remains of Che, says, "I curse faith in all victories."

We are left to our opinions, to our emotional and intellectual scrutiny of our experience. The audience alone remains to puzzle and pick from the psy-war bombardment of words and images, abandoned by its would-be teachers.

Ideally, this should prove a profound experience. It didn't work that way for me. Too much was lost in the fluctuating rhythms of the performance, which were not maintained at levels of intensity suitable to the text. This would be difficult for any group, given the Brechtian nature of the teaching piece and its theatre lab format, but it must be particularly hard for this group assembled only for this one production.

There is material worth examining, but really none to experience, because we are distanced from the performance by words spoken from actors distance, and words shouted when they could be whispered The screen images are carefully chosen and many of the performance images are strong, but the necessary cohesiveness is lacking.

But I'm glad that Theatre Lobby undertook this experiment, and I'm glad that Eastern European plays are being done in Washington. I hope for more of each.

MOBY DICK As Adapted By JACK ARANSON at Ford's Theatre

BECAUSE THE INTIMACY of Ford's theatre is very suitable for one-man shows, Ford's gets a lot of them. Some of them are bound to be better than others, and I don't know where to count Jack Aranson's one-man adaption of Herman Melville's majestic novel.

Jack Aranson, it should be said, does well interpreting the line he has given himself from the novel. He even manages to become quite compelling a few times in the second act as he switches back and forth among the thirteen characters he portrays. But why he should try to harness such a giant of a novel into a one-man production is beyond my ken

It may be well that Melville's prose "Should be heard as well as read" as Aranson states in his introduction in the program, but surely it shouldn't all be heard in less than two hours of speaking. Moby Dick is a novel that plumbs the depths of the soul as well as the depths of the sea. The story of the hunt of the great white whale is not a Sabatini adventure story, it cannot become simply a telling of a tale by a man who decided to go to sea and ended up with a captain who wanted to chase a whale to his own destruction. Which is what this one-man production makes it.

All perepheral material to the plot is dropped. Ishmael's important relationship to Queequeg no longer exists, and the studies of obsession and the science of whaling give way to enacted anecdotes.

It is a brash and ambitious idea of Mr. Aranson's to think the book can be reduced to a one-man show, but it is distinctly a reasonable thought of his to decide that he could play it once it was reduced. His skills as an actor are apparently abundant and his movement from character to character is accomplished and clear. Perhaps only his delivery of Father Mapple's sermon is a serious error; being accurately a representation of a boring preacher, it is not a representation of the old testament thunderer in the novel. The sermon was so boring as delivered that I found myself looking around the audience to see how many people in the congregation were dozing to the words and the organ music.

The direction of the work by Phillip Pruneau is good, creating, as it does, a sense of sea movement solely through Aranson's steady seasoned circling of the stage. The generally unobtrusive sound of bells and storm do much to keep the work progressing, and the set design by Stuart Wurtzel is clean and suitably mautical work.

----N. C.

OPENINGS:

A Conflict of Interest The world premiere of Jay Broad's drama opens Feb. 9 at Arena Stage.

The Philanthropist A new British comedy begins previews Feb. 10 at Washington Theatre Club.

Subject to Fits A drama adapted from Dostoyevski's The Idiot opens Feb. 10 at the Folger

Roll Your Own A multimedia event including works by Beckett continues Feb. 10 at the Open Stage.

Black Pepper A dramatic rap on the contemporary scene opens previews Feb. 10 at Back Alley.

Washington's Enviornmental Theatre Workshop will hold open rehearsals of their new event, Facets , Friday and Saturday, Feb. 11 and 12 at their studio at 1519 Wisconsin Avenue. There is no charge for performances, though a contribution is requested. For further information call FE 8-4744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## excerpts from
## The Journal of Albion Moonlight

*I am ambitious of doing the world some good: if I should be spared, that may be the work of future years—in the interval I will essay to reach to as high a summit in poetry as the nerve bestowed upon me will suffer. The faint conceptions I have of poems to come bring the blood frequently into my forehead. All I hope is, that I may not lose all interest in human affairs—that the solitary indifference I feel for applause, even from the finest spirits, will not blunt any acuteness of vision I may have. I do not think it will. I feel assured I should write from the mere yearning and fondness I have for the beautiful, even if my night's labors should be burnt every morning, and no eye ever shine upon them. But even now I am perhaps not speaking from myself, but from some character in whose soul I now live. . . .*

— — — — — — — —

What is not understood is that talent has nothing whatever to do with creation. Mediocre artists produce a veritable cloudburst of talent; in fact, it is their sign, their stock in trade. If you can make nothing, then see to it that the *effort* of making is beautiful; but if you are a maker, you will know that somewhere the thing you would do has already been done, and you will set about quietly to do it.

## I DO NOT BELIEVE IN DEATH

So it is the duty of the artist to discourage all traces of shame
To extend all boundaries
To fog them in right over the plate
To kill only what is ridiculous
To establish problems
To ignore solutions
To listen to no one
To omit nothing
To contradict everything
To generate the free brain
To bear no cross
To take part in no crucifixion
To tinkle a warning when mankind strays
To explode upon all parties
To wound deeper than the soldier
To heal this poor obstinate monkey once and for all
To have kids with pretty angels
To display his dancing seed
To sail only in polar seas
To laugh at every situation
To besiege all their cities
To exhaust the primitive
To follow every false track
To verify the irrational
To exaggerate all things
To inhabit everyone
To lubricate each proportion
To experience only experience

To deviate at every point
To offer no examples
To dismiss all support
To make one monster at least
To go underground immediately
To smell the shark's ass
To multiply all opinions
To work only in the distance
To extend all shapes
To acquire a sublime reputation
To consort forever with the runaway
To sport the glacial eye
To direct all smouldering ambitions
To frequent only the exterminating planets
To kidnap the phantom's first-born
To forego no succulent filth
To masquerade as the author of every platitude
To overwhelm the mariner with improper charts
To expose himself to every ridicule
To ambush their blow-nose Providence
To set a flame in the high air
To exclaim at the commonplace alone
To cause the unseen eyes to open
To advance with the majesty of the praying serpent
To contrive always to be caught with his pants down
To sprinkle mule-milk on the lifted brows of virgins
To attach no importance whatever to his activity
To admire only the absurd
To be concerned with every profession save his own
To raise a fortuitous stink on the boulevards of truth and beauty
To desire an electrifiable intercourse with a female alligator
To lift the flesh above the suffering
To forgive the beautiful its disconsolate deceit
To send the world away to crawl under his discarded pedestals
To have the cunning of the imperilled wave

To hide his lamentations in the shredded lungs of the tempest
To recommend stone eyelashes for all candid lookers
To attribute every magnificence to himself
To maintain that the earth is neither round nor flat but a scomaphoid
To flash his vengeful badge at every abyss
To be revolted by only the sacred cow which piddles at the toes of the swamp
To kneel with the blind and drunk brigands and learn their songs
To *happen*
To embrace the intemperate hermaphrodite of memory
It is the artist's duty to be alive
To drag people into glittering occupations
To return always to the renewing stranger
To observe only the funereal spectator
To assume the ecstasy in all conceivable attitudes
To follow the plundering whirlpool to its source
To cry out nervously with every knock
To stock his shelves with plaintive confessions and pernicious diaries
To outflow the volcano in semen and phlegm
To be treacherous when nothing is to be gained
To enrich himself at the expense of everyone
To reel in an exquisite sobriety
To blush perpetually in gaping innocence
To drift happily through the ruined race-intelligence
To burrow beneath the subconscious
To defend the unreal at the cost of his reason
To obey each outrageous impulse
To commit his company to all enchantments
To rage against the sacrificing shepherds
To return to a place remote from his native land
To pursue the languid executioner to his hall bedroom
To torment the spirit-lice

To cover the mud with distinguished vegetation
To regain the emperor's chair
To pass from one world to another in carefree devotion
To withdraw only when all have been profaned
To contract every battering disease
To peel off all substances from the face of horror
To glue himself to every lascivious breast
To hurl his vigorous cone into every trough
To unroll the hide from that repugnant rhinoceros Time
To refrain from no ownership
To crowd the squat-rumped centuries into his own special residence
To plunge beyond their smoking armpits

One must be steeped in an indifference to the little matter of the laying on of hands—the artist must keep the world from knowing the exact complexion of his success. To be aware of the public image of yourself is to lose your own special identity. For the world, your least notable face; for yourself, no face at all.

Topenville is a city with a population about three times as big as that of Chicago and Cedar Rapids combined. Huge casks of flaming whale oil, placed at each street intersection, furnish the only illumination. There are no houses, no shops, no police-stations—these hardy people live in baskets suspended from captive balloons; and indeed the whole effect is one of a stupendous garden with the cables leading up stem-like to giant, vari-colored eggplants that sway gracefully in the back-wash of fighting planes which constantly harass them—amusing to hear the deafening pops when a direct hit is made. This goes on all the time. Those who are shot down immediately go up again, this time as pilots bent on bringing down a few balloons in their turn; in this way everyone has a chance to be shot at and to do a little shooting. No one is unemployed because there are always balloons and planes to be built, and damaged ones in need of repairs and new parts. Everyone, of course, is much too busy to eat.

This sport is quite harmless and entertaining. We had heard that death was unknown; that is true—in a certain sense. The real truth is that these people are dead; what they fear is life. When they 'die', they are transported to Hannibal, Missouri, where they must remain for all time. Their chief sage has said: "Life must come to all men; much as we may struggle against it."

Fortunately there is only one thing which can bring them disaster: this is a small, blunt-nosed gadget looking not unlike a stocking-darner—in fact, it is a stocking-darner. How these terrible instruments have been smuggled into Topenville is a problem which has occupied their Secret Service for countless centuries. The slightest touch from the business end of these darners is enough to send the bravest of their heroes spinning head over heels into Hannibal. They go off over the mountain wailing that at last life is upon them—and their fellows weep bitterly, thinking of the awful fate that awaits them there. Death is so sweet in Topenville—God! why must we live in Missouri! . . .

For the greater part of our stay, officials seemed to think we were foreign balloon experts called in to devise newer and more rugged craft; every protest of ours was met by a fresh flood of maps and blue prints—over which we were expected to pore. Finally, thinking to demonstrate our total ignorance (and thus win release), I made the suggestion that they fill the big gas bags with cement mixed with horsemanure in equal parts—this they did at once, *and it worked beautifully.* We became heroes overnight: they never tired of taking us up in the air and shooting us down. We had revolutionized their whole death.

JUNE 21 ▸ Everyone is saying: where can we hide when the war comes? No one at all is saying: where can we hide the war?

Carol came to my room tonight. She is not unhappy. She speaks of Germans, of the English, of the French, but never of soldiers, never of death in war. She hates Hitler, yet she says she wants peace. That is a lie. She must hate the way men die in war. Any man with a gun aimed at another man is Hitler. He believes in Hitler. Hitler will be gone tomorrow—a withered leaf falling into a millrace—but the hatred of Hitler will live to breed others like him. I do not hate Hitler. I hate what brought him into being—and the thing that keeps him where he is. I am interested in humanity. Hitler serves the enemies of his people more than the people themselves. He is the hate! "We have no quarrel with the German people," said the late Woodrow Wilson.

I believe that the German working class will know what to do with Hitler when the proper time comes; and I believe that the English, French, Italian, and American Hitlers will be dealt with in the proper way too. What a stupid animal you are, Carol—hating Hitler! Hitler hates, and in hating him you become a Hitler. How the governments tremble when they think that all men will one day see under their masks—and find the same thing.

I disapprove of rich people. They spend my money in a senseless manner. They haven't the proper respect for the stink of their asses. They think a tiled bathroom takes them out of the class of the dung-dropping animals. This is a serious error out of which came grand opera and horse shows. The culture of the monogrammed laxative and the historical novel. Everyone with an income of ten thousand or more a year should be required to do his little job at least once a month in full view of the populace —for the furtherance of a better understanding between nations.

## kenneth patchen
## 1972-?

The question is not: do we believe in God? but rather: does God believe in us? And the answer is: only an unbeliever could have created our image of God; and only a false God could be satisfied with it.

If you were to become Jesus Christ, what would become of Him? Christ was too proud to live in Christ, you understand; otherwise He would not have asked to dwell in mankind. Religion is always a process of muscling-in by those desirous of changing station: the comedy occurs when men bleed themselves dry in an effort to live in a God Whose sole aim is to live in them.

# TO DESTROY YOUR ENEMIES IS ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING TO DESTROY.

JUNE 30 ▸ After supper today I went up in a bomber. The pilot was a nice, young chap. He said that he was sixteen, but he looked younger. His name was G. R. Deaken.

He showed me how to release the bombs. I tried out a couple. It was fun, of a kind.

I dropped one on a little feed-mill. The miller went up like a geranium opening. His head, which had come off at once, kept yelling "Cleo! Cleo!" going higher and higher until it whizzed by us.

G. R. grinned.

My next fell in a field covered with cows. It worked great on the cows. It must have been a new experience for them, being cut to pieces by something costing thirty thousand dollars. We were using good bombs.

Then another plane came up and started chasing us around. G. R. got very excited. "Use it! Use it!" he shouted, meaning the machine gun. Just at that time something ran like hail along the side of our plane. That was it! They wanted a fight! I grabbed hold of the machine-gun and swung it around, pulling away for dear life on a little gadget that looked like a trigger. Put! Pit! Pit! The first round got poor G. R. Deaken in the middle of the back. He wasn't expecting that and he died without so much as an allegiance to the flag on his lips.

In an instant the enemy was clamoring up the wings, bayonets held crosswise in their mouths. The plane was spinning around like a tin snowflake.

"Have a cigarette, boys?" I asked, holding out my pack.

They looked surprised, but they didn't shoot me.

I smelt something suspiciously like shit.

"That's the war," one of them said, taking a cigarette.

"Are you always scared like that?" I asked.

"Not always . . . Not when we're dead."

"Well," I said, "you'll soon not be scared anymore."

We hit the ground like an empire falling.

I crawled out just before the damn thing went up in flames. It smelled like a steak-fry for a little while.

War is endured because it offers us a spectacle . . . a better and bigger kind of fireworks. It scares the hell out of us. It turns us inside out. There is its hold, its fascination. Nobody can understand how year after year and age after age war is put up with. It's because everybody wants to see what it's really like. Everybody is secretly proud of it. We put *that* on. God! nothing like this ever before. Did they think they had a war . . . watch this one! But the real secret lies in property.

*A diversion: Moonlight advises the Rulers to examine attentively what will happen to a sword when there is no one alive to wipe the blood off it.* . . . . . .

# books

DOUBLE OR NOTHING by Raymond Federman. The Swallow Press, 1971, 202pp., 7" x 10", hardcover, $6.

IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE by Nicholas Delbanco. William Morrow & Co., 249pp., hardcover, $6.95.

Reviewed by Judy Willis

IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE is a novel by a 29-year-old college professor about a 48-year-old, by-the-way-Jewish architect named Nicholas Delbanco who writes a novel about a 29-year-old novelist who is writing a novel about a 48-year-old architect. No it's not. It's a novel written by a 29-year-old professor named Delbanco who writes an autobiographical journal-novel. No, that's not it either. It's 29-year-old Delbanco's journal stuck in middle of 29-year-old Delbanco's short story about a 48-year-old architect named Delbanco. And if you're confused, so was I. So let's talk about something else for a while.

DOUBLE OR NOTHING is a novel by a middle-aged college professor about a middle-aged man who plans to lock himself in a rented room for 365 days in order to write a novel about a young French, by-the-way-Jewish, immigrant called variously Boris, Robert and several other things, who escaped from the Nazis by jumping off a train, just like Federman did in his youth. In the novel, the middle-aged man gets so involved in compiling lists of what he'll need (including 365 one-lb. boxes of noodles) during his year's stay in the room, that he never gets around to locking himself in to actually write the damn thing.

DOUBLE OR NOTHING is a concrete novel, as in concrete poetry, in which "words are used as physical materials on the page," like the book's blurb says. The oversize (double length) format makes the pages look typewriter-paper size, and the type looks like typewriter type. When you read the novel, it feels like you're reading a typed manuscript. Each page has its own form: some have justified margins, some unjustified, and others have lines which justify only themselves, forcing a word to split wherever the line ends without so much as a hyphen; the words on one page shape a playing card, on another they take the form of a noodle, which is what the first person "recorder" of the novel has decided will be his only food for the year he is locked in the room recording the story as told to him by the second person who is a paranoid gambler, and who now that I that I think about it, is probably the one who decided on the noodles -- with a little tomato sauce now and then. The story is about the third person, Robert Boris etc. mentioned above. There is also probably a fourth person, Federman tells us, to supervise the whole mess.

Sounds gimmicky, doesn't it? That's what I thought, too, and was ready to dislike it. When I started reading it, though, I quickly realized that the "gimmick" of making shapes out of words is as essential to this novel as the words themselves. In fact, this is the first novel I've read in a long time in which every device, every gimmick, every word, is consciously used in the structure of the novel. The size of the page, for instance, makes you immediately conscious of the limits or possibilities of a page that size. The differences in margins force you to realize that type both limits, and makes possible, sentences.

In addition to presenting a story which is at once entertaining and grim, DOUBLE OR NOTHING raises questions about the very nature of the novel form, and about its limitations and possibilities. For instance, does Federman's arbitrarily changing the form of each page mean that all form is arbitrary? And there's the aestheticians' debate on "what is the medium in literature?" In poetry, it's not so hard, because poetry can and should be read aloud. So we can say that in poetry the human voice is the medium. But in fiction, what plays the role of transmitter? The printed word? The printed page? Does the type stand in the same relation to the writer as oil paints to the artist? As plaster of paris to the sculptor? As the action on the stage to the playwright? As the dancer to the choreographer? As the musician to the composer?

Yes. No. Maybe so.

In all other art forms, there are three essential elements: the creator; the medium through which the work of art is transmitted from the creator; and the receiver, be it listener or viewer, to whom the work of art is transmitted. In writing, though, we have only the first and third elements: the writer and the reader. Me and you. Does that mean that the novel can never be an art form? Or is there an element in prose writing which plays the part of the medium?

In an effort to raise the novel to an art form, Federman seems to be saying that we must use the printed word as the medium and therefore, where and how it is placed on the printed page makes a difference in what the novel is saying. This is certainly true of his novel. But I'm not sure it is universally true.

Considering type as an integral part of the novel-as-art brings us to several absurdities. Is the type the author plunks down with his 1925 Royal portable the medium? What if he writes longhand, or dictates into a tape recorder and someone else types it up? Is the typist the artist? Or is the handwriting or tape recording part of the work of art? If it is only the printed-in-book-form version that is to be judged as art, does that make the linotype operator the artist? Federman has neatly sidestepped the whole issue by having his finished novel look like a manuscript, but what about the rest of us?

I don't like the idea of type being considered part of the art form. I'd like to think that the real medium in writing, because it is neither an auditory nor a visual art, is the mind of the reader. THE MIND IS THE MEDIUM. Yet my own typewriter contradicted my words. THE MIND IS NOT THE MEDIUM because in all other arts the mind of the artist and the mind of the receiver (in this case, the reader) are also involved. But in other art forms there is something else in between. Yeah, the medium. Can it really be where the type's at?

I think the placement of words on a page should be perceived not visually, but only mentally as it alters the meaning or impact of the words. Or as Federman has his first person record:

"The visual is important
but should not take preference over other crucial problems."

After photography, the novel is the newest of art forms (if it is an art form). The rules haven't been made yet. We are just beginning to investigate the possibilities. If you read DOUBLE OR NOTHING, maybe your possibilities will be more possible than mine.

Nicholas Delbanco

In contrast to Federman's work, the gimmick of a novel-within-a-novel in Delbanco's IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE don't make no sense. The part of the novel written in the third person singular would have made a half-decent short story, but Delbanco had to go get arty and stick in a first person, sentence-fragmented journal. IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE inspired me only to devise this essay test for Delbanco's Bennington students:

1. Why does the journal-novel within the novel written in the first person seem less real than the outer novel's "fictional" third person narrative?

2. Why are the dates at the headings of the journal different than the dates at the beginning of the jottings for each day?

3. What else can be learned from this novel, but that the main character is unsuccessful in putting his life in order, as symbolized by his failure to turn his journal into a novel?

4. What the hell does the ending -- a brief outburst on Democracy, the ruling classes and the need for revolution -- have to do with the rest of the book?

5. If she didn't like it, why did Judy bother reading more than 10 pages?

6. Why did two Sunday supplements give it rave reviews?

7. Is it possible that Judy missed something?

8. Is the king parading around again without any clothes?

THE LIBERATED WOMAN AND OTHER ESSAYS by Midge Decter, Coward, McCann, & Geoghegan, Inc, 1971, $6.95.

Reviewed by Christine Duewel

Midge Decter's book, THE LIBERATED WOMAN AND OTHER AMERICANS (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc.) will doubtlessly be bought by many women eager to learn more about the women's movement. And that will be a sad waste of $6.95. So pass the word to your feminist friends -- Midge Decter is not on your side.

"The Liberated Woman" is one essay among several groups of essays that comprise the book --"Being a Woman", "Being a Liberal", "Being an American". It was evidently selected for the book's title because of the contemporary and controversial nature of the women's issue. Actually, the essays are written in and about the Sixties and seem anything but contemporary -- film reviews of "On The Beach", "Dr. Strangelove", an essay on Leon Uris, the

Kennedy's, Adlai Stevenson, several book reviews. Not only are they dated, they are dull.

Decter's credentials for writing thoughtful, cool, rational and alas, dull essays are impeccable. She is a former executive editor of HARPER'S MAGAZINE and more important, at least her press release mentions this first, she is the wife of Norman Podheretz, editor of COMMENTARY, and the mother of four children.

She describes herself as "a career woman unalterably opposed to most of the central attitudes of liberalism." As a writer, her preoccupation has been "to account for the distance between what is, or must be, the experience of something and the way that experience has come to be talked about in political life no less than private." I'm not sure what that means, but it's typical of the way she writes.

A major concern of hers is the "intellectual community", to which she continually defers, and which often appears to coincide with her own intellect. She worries about "the enlargement of intellectual possibility and the devotion to standards of excellence" of this community. In passing she mentions the problems of several other groups -- "the Negro" and "the poor". They come out sounding like an unpleasant foreign disease.

Midge Decter has occassional good insights and perceptions, but they come from her head, never her heart (is that why she sounds so much like a man?). She is embarrassed, amused, guilty about many things, but angry or joyful about very few. In an essay on "Sex, My Daughters, and Me", a Freudian analysis of her "primary sexual rivalry" and power struggles with her daughters (poor kids), she says, "The words for thoughts come easier than those for feelings." In her case, how true. She herself is a victim of that unpleasant foreign disease -- Intellectualitis.

Even Decter's section on women -- perhaps especially that one -- seems to be written by a man. She refers to us as "they" and has all the proper liberal, paternalistic male attitudes. "The Liberated Woman" essay, Decter's biographical sketch of what she thinks is a typical feminist, portrays a white, upper middle class, pampered bitch. She makes several trips to Europe, goes to a prestigious Eastern college, joins various worthwhile causes (war protest, civil rights), has a monogamous series of love affairs and heads for New York to become a writer (Mrs. Podheretz?). Her parents continue to discreetly support her as she dabbles in a career and more love affairs.

One day "she" is introduced to some women, equally pampered, who are dissatisfied with their status, and "our heroine" is subverted by feminism. The reasons Decter gives for this are lengthy, complex and ignoble. Mainly they concern the woman's need for the special status of an oppressed victim, an excuse for any failures in her career, fear of responsibility. In short, the need to blame others for her own shortcomings (like "the Negro"?). Once liberated the writer's works concern only herself and her sexual temperament.

Decter then launches an all-out attack on woman's liberation, stressing the familiar arguement that women want freedom without responsibility, "freedom from all difficulty." She begins to sound very un-liberal in the process. "The freedom granted by society is the freedom to make certain choices and take the consequences" (like the freedom to choose VietNam or jail, an illegal abortion or welfare). She does not attempt to substantiate these claims from real women or statistics.

In a later essay Decter tells us about her childhood family housemaid, Rose. "Rose was particularly my property." Her family, she reports, was not wealthy during the Depression, but "everyone had housemaids then." Did Rose have a housemaid, I wondered. And just who is pampered?

Decter is as misinformed about "new women" as she is about housemaids. We come in all colors, classes and life styles. We aren't all supported by parents or men. There are more secretaries among us than writers, because that is what most women do. As for "freedom from all difficulty" -- struggling to gain more self-confidence, more control over our lives, facing the ridicule of men and other women for our beliefs, these are not easy things. The freedom we want is from confining stereotypes, programmed roles, vicarious lives.

Maybe Midge Decter's description fits some women she knows. It could also fit a lot of men. Meanwhile, women are overworked, underpaid and maligned the world over. And we're beginning to do something about it. So move over, Mrs. Podheretz, the Seventies are here.

STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE: A REPORT ON CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN AMERICA, prepared for the American Friends Service Committee. Hill & Wang, Inc., 179 pp. $4.50 cloth, $1.95 paper.

Review by Robert Palmer

It used to be easier to justify the character of the American penal system; some procedure was necessary to protect us law-respecting citizens from those who would, through criminal acts, endanger our welfare. Lately, though, as more of us found ourselves breaking laws concerning drug use, political protest, sexual habits or the draft, we become more aware of American society's definition of criminality, and we began to concern ourselves with our own chances of obtaining justice in the United States. And the more we formerly "respectable"people learned about America's courts and prisons, the more difficult it became to justify their policies.

The authors of STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE seem to approach their work with just this sense of disillusionment. The book is a group project of a "Working Party" of the American Friends Service Committee, the social service arm of the Friends, and the party's 17 members list various credentials -- they are college professors, ACLU directors, workers in prisoners' aid organizations, even prisoners themselves -- with all members claiming some kind of familiarity with prisons "through their work, visitation, or life inside."

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There are two major themes to the group's analysis. First, they outline the penal system's two-headed obligation to punish and to rehabilitate, but they conclude that, in practice, the rehabilitation process is the product of faulty psychology, and furthermore that the perceived need for punishment takes precedence over most attempts at rehabilitation. Secondly, the authors analyze the American tradition of discretion (on the part of judges, parole boards, etc.) and indeterminite sentencing. They explain that these practises evolved from attempts to make trial and punishment more adaptable and equitable for all, but here the authors conclude that such discretionary power in the hands of police, judges, and other authorities has only served to perpetuate bias, racism and a double standard of justice.

Overall, the group seems to feel that social control is the over-riding priority in the American penal system today; that the system works to protect important corporate and political interests and to punish and isolate those who, by reason of poverty, minority status, political rebellion, or life-style, are perceived as possible dangers to the power structure.

Obviously, there is little in such a report that can be classified as "news"; most of this subject matter has been covered in many previous works. Indeed, the book's wandering organization frequently minimizes its own better arguments and several good points are simply dropped into the wrong context and never adequately developed anywhere.

It is not, in essence, a scholarly work -- there is little in the way of a stated research plan, few footnotes or other references to relevant source material, and though there is some concern for statistics, these are usually not effectively presented and frequently seem obtrusive. Some would quarrel as well that the Working Party membership is neither objective nor totally representative of all those involved in the American penal system -- what would a judge, policeman, parole officer, or prison warden have said to the group's criticisms? The incorporation of their opinions might have enlivened several arguments, though by its analytical nature, the book could probably never arouse the emotional impact of such related works as SOLEDAD BROTHER or IF THEY COME IN THE MORNING.

Notwithstanding these faults, there is something of value in STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE. If the book is not really a research work, it is a well-reasoned position paper -- it shows the evolution of the party's opinions and enables the reader to follow these people as they try to assimilate and interpert other findings, and to reach a group consensus. Though their ideas are not always clear, though they do trip over an occasional cliché, and sometimes accept a half-truth that could be questioned, the group's report bears evidence of honest labor and effort. They haven't taken the familiar easy way out -- building a book by collecting vapid rhetoric -- nor have they lapsed into offering simplistic solutions.

The solutions they do offer follow naturally from their research conclusions -- curbing discretionary power of enforcement authorities, striving for uniform enforcement among all groups of people, distinguishing between punishment and rehabilitation, redefining the nature of what is criminal, etc. But, in keeping with their earlier conclusions, the group notes that these reforms can never be fully realized until other economic and political institutions are made responsive to all citizens, not just the wishes of the established elite.

The penal system, by definition, will always be an instrument of social control in any society. The Working Party realizes that changing the nature of society as a whole is the only way to bring lasting reforms to any individual institution of that society. In presenting a rational analysis of the penal system's relation to society in general, the authors have done their readers a substantial service.

# counternotes

## BRUCE ROSENSTEIN

FARTHER ALONG --- The Byrds -- Columbia KC 31050

After that vinyl pap passed off as an album known as Byrdmaniax, more than a few people were ready to write off the Byrds as Permanently Out To Lunch and no longer worth listening to. The combination of that LP and their atrocious gig at American University last September didn't whet my appetite for Farther Along. In fact, it was nearly a month after its release that I finally got around to listening to it.

Farther Along is a very good rock album. It is their best LP since Sweetheart Of The Rodeo, which is to say, their best album since they've contented themselves with being another rock band and not one of the two or three best. The days of innovation and experimentation are in the past.

Following Dylan's lead, in 1965, Roger McGuinn in turn led a generation of other bands by coming up with excellent rock music from a folk base. In 1967, they were right there among first, making head music, and then, in 1969, pulled another one off with Sweetheart Of The Rodeo, the first and surely the best of the country efforts by a rock band. From 1965 to 1969, the Byrds paved the way for other bands to explore music which they may not have been able to do otherwise. It had a great effect on the listener, too, for a lot of Byrd fans who disliked country music found out it wasn't all that bad around the time of Sweetheart, and most of them grew to genuinely like it.

But McGuinn started laying back after that with Dr. Byrds and Mr. Hyde and Ballad of Easy Rider, assimilating country music into rock rather than letting it dominate, and he then surpised the hell out of a lot of us by (1) recording a live album [if any band had the reputation of being a poor live band, it was the Byrds,] and (2) by somehow keeping the same personnel for two years. The latter is an incredible fact, when you consider how many people passed in and out of the Bryds over the years. While Dr. Byrds and Ballad had their moments and the live album wasn't totally worthless, it is only with Farther Along that the Byrds have re-built themselves up to the status of a really good rock band. McGuinn has no doubt realized that they are no longer capable of being at the absolute top of everything in the 1970's, and seems to be content, at the time being, with making music which is quite wonderful, but which is being done by many others. In 1972, it may seem healthy enough for all concerned, since there are many rock followers who weren't into the old Byrds, and don't remember the classics. And many people are so hungryy for anything that's good that this will certainly meet up to very high standards. But I'm curious about what the old Byrds freaks (a true-blue diehard breed who rival Dead freaks in fanaticism) think of Farther Along. Do they accept it as a great 1972 rock album by their favorites, or do they long for the old days of being the best?

You don't need to be into the Byrds to appreciate Farther Along. It is simply a solid rock album. Some of it is good, some of it is great, none of it is astounding. Probably the best cut is "America's Great National Pastime", co-written by Skip Battin and Kim Fowley; the former Byrd bassist who sings on this cut; the latter, the legendary Hollywood-songwriter-bizzare-o who may someday turn out to be the superstar he tells everyone he is. The tune kicks along with clever, unpretentious double meaning which does give us a humorous, painfully true portrait of life in America: "The great taste of Coke has refreshed players, the hot and the tired/ the weary and the sore." "One of America's great National Pastimes is cuttin' the grass/ grabbin' some ass/ livin' too fast." It's a great song, and deserves to be heard. There is some other top flight material; like Clarence White's country ballad "Bugler" and McGuinn's lovely "Antique Sandy" (unfortunately marred by some out-of-place echo), which is slow and laid back. Generally, that type of song, including "Precious Kate" and "Lazy Waters", is the most successful on the album. In addition, the title song is a nice country tune. "Get Down Your Line" gallops along pretty well, and "Tiffany Queen" is pretty interesting. It is in the 1966, Dylan tradition, both musically and lyrically: "I was doin' an interview and telling them all lies". It's an enjoyable, curious song.

Then there are the "songs that anyone can do", meaning anyone with at least a modest degree of talent. Johnny Otis' "So Fine" is a fifties rock'n'roller which is done up nicely but it's more the kind of song you put into your live set than on an album. White cuts loose back to the bluegrass days on "Bristol Steam Convention Blues". He's great, but he's done it many times before, and a lot of others can do it too. Still, it gives the album variety and may help to turn more people on to bluegrass. "B.B. Class Road" is a raunchy hard rock song about road managers, presumably sung by their roadie, who occasionally gets up there and shakes a tambourine on stage. It's an okay song, but I doubt that many people will care to sympathize with the plight of the guardian/schlep of a rock and roll band.

McGuinn is no longer Number One. He hasn't been for some time. But, considering what he has put out under the Byrds' label for the past two years, Farther Along is an impressive achievement. He's been there all along, and has found three others to help him with the load instead of making it a one man show. Farther Along is a most welcome album, and it may well be not just the conclusion of one phase of the Byrds, but the beginning of another chapter of innovation in the history of one of the most important bands we will ever know.

WILDERNESS ROAD --- Columbia C 311118

In these days of throwing together songs to make an album, as ambitious an undertaking as Wilderness Road's debut LP becomes all the more refreshing. The band is into combining satire and theatrics with rock music and from this album you can tell that they have an inspiring live show. Two of the group are former members of the Chicago improvisational comedy group The Second City. There is nothing "funny" about this album, but there is a certain wry sense of humor pervading the songs.

Wilderness Road's album is a whole; it tells a story. Basically, beginning with "Wilderness" -- an instrumental scene-setter -- and the opening cut, "Queasy Rider," the album goes on to unravel the story of a killer in his flight from justice in the days of the Old West. There isn't much developing of a plot to the story, rather, more attention is paid to describing the lives of people in the days of the Wild West. There is the story of the "Bounty Man", and the medicine shows in "Dr. Morpho's Revenge", and faith healers in "Revival". But the story doesn't have to be about the Old West, it could be about 1972, or any other year. "Bounty Man" doesn't have to be about someone who lived 100 years ago if you don't feel like taking it that way. The anguish of the outlaw in "I Had The Right" could be about any murderer who commited his crime. But, you will get more out of the album if you do take these selections as parts of the specific story.

Another useful aspect of this album is that the songs can stand on their own as well as being part of the whole. Some of them, however, such as "Death Dream"/"Don't Cry Lady" and the "Revival" section, can be best appreciated when not taken out of context. But, you could dig the hell out of "Bounty Man", "Queasy Rider", or "Pictures In A Gallery", without ever knowing they're parts of a story. Part of the credit, here, has to go to producer Jack Richardson, whose Nimbus 9 Productions has worked wonders for bands as diverse as the Guess Who and Alice Cooper. And Wilderness Road happens to be good on their axes, which includes the use of mandolin, banjo, and dobro by Nate Herman, who wrote most of the songs. Their singing is effectively expressive, especially in their tight harmonies. While never actually going into a totally country sound, they incorporate country into their rock so you almost don't think about it.

One of the best segments of the record, and the one which could have gone wrong most easily, but didn't, is the "Revival". It consists of five short songs, sung by both the "preacher" -- a fanatic healer -- and the outlaw, as in "Lost and Lonely Navigator". It is an old-time view of religion, of "finding my way home", and "singing my song to the Lord". The portion ends with "I Had The Right", in which the outlaw is invited to "come on in and talk to the Lord", which he does, and he recounts the story of the murder: "It wasn't done from anger or from spite/ Just seemed to me I Had The Right."

Another effective part is "Death Dream", which is recited in the words of the outlaw's lover. She says: "I dreamed I saw you dead my love/ Dreamed I saw you dead/ With your mourners standing at your feet and the flowers at your head." It lasts one minute and segues into "Don't Cry Lady", where the outlaw softly sings that there's nothing to worry about, "I'll be comin' home". Then both are sung/recited simultaneously and it's -- dare I say it? -- moving. Then, a sort of fade out and soft acoustic guitar, and then pounding into the familiar guitar from "Queasy Rider" as it becomes "Rider's Return". It really hits you hard, the first time you hear it. Things, we find out, are not all right. "The sun came up in the morning/ Too bad I won't see it last." "Tomorrow night in the evening paper/ My name goes down in black/ No reason for me to worry/ I won't be comin' back."

If you like good rock music, a good story, and a well thought out, flawlessly executed project, Wilderness Road is what you're looking for. It's hands down the best rock album released in the past couple of months. Listen and find out for yourself.

WHITE DUCK --- UNI 73122

It's doubtful that if you really, really tried, really wracked your brain, you could come up with a worse name for a rock band, you just couldn't. It's bland, colorless, doesn't tell you anything about the band or the music. It's dreadful. And that cover... I've seen worse, like, it's not as revolting as John Sebastian Live or Steve Miller's Rock Love, but it is embarrassing. If it's true that some albums sell because of their covers, this one hasn't got a chance.

It's true that there are a wealth of LP's with lousy covers and terrible names for the groups, but what is disturbing in this case is that White Duck is actually a good band and this is an impressive LP. It would be a shame if they received little recognition because of their name. You'd be surprised at how many people judge a book by its cover.

White Duck is a rock band with heavy country overtones, but they borrow freely from other rock musicians, apparently without giving it a second thought. They seem to be doing this while feeling around for their own style. The songs are all originals and some of them seem to be leaning toward their own style while some are easily traced to established musicians. They sound like themselves on tunes like "No", "Really", and "World (Keep On Turnin')" and on others, though they are copping styles from people like Paul McCartney (in "Lonely"); Jimi Hendrix, (Don't Mix With Politics"); Neil Young, ("No Time"); and Black Oak Arkansas, ("Billy Goat"). This groping for a style is most evident in the vocals of Don Kloetzke, who never seems to sing the same way twice. Maybe that's good, but it comes off here as inconsistent.

They all have a hand in the songwriting and their lyrics could be a lot better than they are, but that should come with time. Basically, they are good musicians who sound like they are having a lot of fun playing and playing together. As for their "borrowing" of styles, I think it would be wrong if the whole album sounded like Hendrix, or Young, but all this will probably become assimilated into the group sound as it evolves. I, for one, hope they get the chance to do it.

THE ALBUM SOUP --- Soup -- Big Tree BTS 2007

Every once in a while a quietly stupendous album comes along without any fanfare or hype and time tells whether or not it will survive in the ruthless dollar and cents jungle rock world. Music From Big Pink was such an album back in 1968, and it made it, but it took a while and The Band had that association with Dylan which helped them to be heard whether they liked it or not. In late 1970, the Velvet Underground gave us Loaded, their humble contribution to rock and roll perfection. It died without a chance and the group soon collapsed partly due to the failure of the album. Let's face it, if you record a masterpiece, an impeccable musical work, and, for all your love and devotion and troubles, your pride and joy is ignored, not even listened to except by a small group of followers, then you are going to have to have a long look at Why Are We Doing All This ? and maybe it's not worth it after all, and if those cretins aren't going to listen to us well, it's tough shit for them and I've Gotta Get Away From This. For months after the failure of Loaded, singer-songwriter-genius Lou Reed went back to Long Island to live with his parents.

Which thus brings us to Soup. The Album Soup is not perfect, but it is close. And, it is being ignored. You can pretty much thank the screwed up record-radio business for this one. In the case of Soup, it is especially ironic that this should happen. A short description of the band is in order to clarify this. Soup hails from Madison, Wisconsin. Not too long ago, they recorded an album and had it released on their own label. It's nearly impossible for such a record to be financially successful, just ask anyone who has ever done a record on their own label and then tried to get adequate distribution for it. I do not know if that album and this are the same. Finally, the band realized that a nationally distributed label would have to be used hence the contract with Big Tree. When the album first came out, early in December, Big Tree wasn't particularly doing handstands over it, but in the time that has elapsed, Big Tree has changed distribution tie-ups from Ampex to Bell Records, which seems to leave Soup somewhere uncomfortably in the middle and the group may end up belonging to no one. All the nightmares of the record business which they obviously foresaw are hitting them right in the face.

Their music has been profoundly affected by the pressures of the music business. They talk of the making of their album in Rock and Roll Lady": "Well we taped out in Mt. Healthy/ But we never made it quite to L.A./ so we pressed it in Chicago/ So we could make the grade". From "To Keep Peace": "I don't want enough money to let it turn my head/ I wanna keep my music and keep it fed." From "Playin' A Different Game", a plea to Just Leave Us Alone to all the vultures of the rock music scene: "I can't see why you try to tear me down/ I've been trying to put my heart into sound/ don't you try to give me a different name/ you know you're playing a different game.

Lyrically, most of the songs, all written by lead singer-guitarist Doug Yankus, come across as the statements of a quiet, sensitive person who has seen a lot of shit gone down and sees more of it every day. He rarely views situations from a positive perspective instead, he says things like, "I'll never love again", "You don't know how I feel/ How could you relate to what is real." His lone alternative to despair and lunacy is in playing his music. On the album cover photos, Doug is the only one of the three group members who's not smiling; he's staring blankly downward on the back cover and glaring straight in your eyes on the front cover.

The music on this album reminds me of early Spirit, with that crisp, economical, jazzy rock sound. Yankus plays some mighty mean guitar, but he is not Flash. His playing and singing on "Rock and Roll Lady" is superb. His "Don't Be Lonely" is a frighteningly good rock song; it's everything that was even in Velvet Underground Street Corner Rock and then some: "Walk down the street and there'll be some way to score soon/ if you need help and you're down I'll be there." His shivering, eerie guitar work sets and builds the mood perfectly.

I really wish that everyone could hear this album. The mere thought that such a work will not be listened to, because of the way some people do business, is sickening. It may not matter to some, but as Doug Yankus puts it in "Rock and Roll Lady", "Life is hard-playing rock and roll." Indeed.


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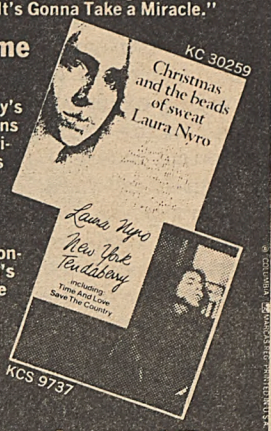


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# ON WGMS

He rocks and listens

He listens and rocks

**By Kirk Cheyfitz**

In a move ostensibly designed to reverse eight years of financial losses, WGMS, the AM side of Washington's only classical music station, will switch to "contemporary" (their term) programming during a six-week transition period starting on or about March 1. WGMS-FM will continue to broadcast its usual 24 hour classical programming and will do so with increased power and improved signal clarity as the result of a new transmitter and improvements to the existing antenna. Until now WGMS and WGMS-FM have been simulcasting (broadcasting exactly the same material on both AM and FM) for just under half of the broadcast day and playing "separate but compatible" classical music the remainder of the time (the stations separate their signals between 7 pm and 7 am).

The station's plans were announced late last month in New York by Ross Taber, Vice-President/ Radio Division of RKO General, Inc. (a subsidiary of General Tire and Rubber Company), which owns, besides its movie houses, cinema releasing agency, cable television services, broadcast television stations, and numerous other communications companies scattered across this country and in Canada, ten radio stations, including WGMS-AM and FM. The management of WGMS indicated that it has been considering a programming change of this sort "every six months or so for the last five or six years," but had declined to implement any specific proposal because of a "hope springs eternal" attitude that, somehow, the financial picture might improve.

Although the roots of the stations economic troubles lie buried in its inability to obtain national advertising accounts due to the small audience that classical music attracts, serious deficits were not encountered until 1966 when the FCC issued a directive which required all broadcasters owning and operating joint AM-FM facilities to cease duplication of at least 51% of their total programming. The intent of the FCC ruling was to provide for an increased diversity in local broadcast services by forcing the stations involved to separate their AM and FM programs for atleast the major portion of the day.

In complying with this ruling, WGMS incurred greatly increased personnel and operating costs with no significant rise in advertising revenue since the two separate stations were still reaching the same small audience with the same specialized classical format. (It is worth noting that an FCC directive designed to increase diversity has, in this case, seemingly helped to provide Washington with yet another AM pop music station and, in the process, has eliminated the only classical AM broadcasts in the city. WGMS claims that they went to the FCC in 1966, pleading financial hardship, and asked to be exempted from the directive. The station further claims that the FCC turned down their petition and the station felt that the Commission would continue to deny any similar petitions.

(The FCC, on the other hand, claims that it has, in fact, ma made specific exceptions to this particular directive for exactly the reasons that prompted WGMS to petition them in '66. Sources close to the Commission implied that WGMS did not press its request for exemption very hard or it would have accepted.)

Personnel at WGMS refuse to divulge the exact nature of the new station's proposed format, but, although the term "top 40" is assiduously avoided, no direct denials are issued. The lack of confirmation not withstanding, two facts, which would tend to substantiate the likelihood of the new AM programming being "top 40" have been established:

First, the new program director for WGMS-AM will be Paul Drew, who is being transferred out of the same position at RKO's San Francisco station, KFRC. It was under Mr. Drew's direction that KFRC first moved up to occupy the number one spot in Bay Area "top 40" programming, and all of his experience in radio has been with this type of operation.

Secondly, RKO General employs a firm called Drake-Chenault as "programming consultants". The Drake of Drake-Chenault is Bill Drake of the well-known "Drake formula" which is a fast-paces "top 40" programming concept designed to pick and alternate musical cuts in such a way as to offend no one. At one time or another, Drake has been both condemned as the king of the mediocre and heralded as the biggest audience attractor and money maker in radio.

While emphatically denying that Drake has any decision-making power over individual station programming, the management of WGMS did go so far as to admit that the members of the RKO chain generally follow Drake-Chenault's advice. "It would certainly be stupid to pay the man money and then not listen to him."

Two questions, then, occur at this point: Why are the people at WGMS being so cautious about revealing the format of the new station? Why are they easing into their new sound over a six to eight week period instead of shifting over right away (an alternative that would appear to be more effective in quickly attracting a new audience to the station)?

I asked these questions of Marvin Roslin, head of sales for RKO General's radio chain and he had an oddly illuminating answer. "We are certainly concerned with doing the job for the people in Washington," he said. "We know that what we're dealing with there is a sensitive area..." (here, he paused to consider what he had just said)..."and, frankly, I don't know if I should discuss it any further."

It would seem that both the executives at RKO in New York and the local management of WGMS are attempting to obscure the full extent of their progamming changes here because they are (understandably) wary of what might be termed "cultural backlash". They are aware that classical music is one of the altar pieces of the cultural temple in America and they are aware that pop music (especially of the "top 40" variety) is identified by the official communicants of that church with everything that is crass, plastic, and degrading in this changing society.

The station's defensive attitude would seem to be justified because already, members of the public are beginning to liken WGM WGMS' decision to that of a land-developer who has just announded his intention of tearing down the Acropolis to make way for a solid chromium high-rise.

Marty Conn, program director of WMAL-FM, reacted differently. "Sure, their reasons for doing this are financial," he said, "but not in the screw-the-public-to-make-a-buck sense. With 'GMS it's not a question of making more money; it's a question of whether they can afford to stay on the air at all. Even RKO can only operate a station in the red for so many years." Mr. Conn further expressed the belief that an RKO pop station in Washington could significantly improve the quality of "top 40" broadcasting on AM. "These people are known as technicians," he said, "and, in time, they could easily turn out to be the best AM rock station in town."

The Evening Star, on the other hand, which owns WMAL, has less sympathetic. Last Saturday [1/29] the Star published an editorial in which WGMS' motives were questioned (however obliquely). It was implied that anyone unscrupulous enough to deprive Washington of AM classical programming could not be trusted to continue serving the cultural community on FM for much longer, either.

The Star, it must be noted, speaks from experience here, because it was only five years ago that WMAL-FM dropped its classical programming and started a long slide into more profitable areas which culminated, a year and a half ago, in that station's present progressive rock format. It was this move on the part of the Evening Star Broadcasting Company, that left WGMS as the sole purveyor of the classics in this area. Oddly enough, at the time, the Star made no editorial comment on their radio station's decision to opt for economic survival.

Victor Forker, WGMS' Vice-President and General Manager, insists that he and RKO are in no way ashamed of their decision. "We have nothing to hide," he offered for the openning remark of an interview conducted in the barren expanse of a new office he had just moved into the previous night. "We feel that this is a very positive move and we feel that we are protecting the classics. Our new FM facilities will be able to produce the best signal possible...and that's what our classical listener wants. At the same time, this new construction would not have been possible without our belief that the mass appeal of the new AM operation will be able to pay some of our bills."

Mr. Forker spoke with sincere concern for those who would wish to continue listneing to WGMS' classical side but might feel they could not afford the necessary FM equipment. "We've looked into this and we've found that you can purchase a small transistor FM receiver for only about 75¢ more than a comparable AM unit." The station is also offering free advertising time to selected radio dealers who will agree to discount their FM products 15-20% for WGMS listeners.

A reading of the public will on this matter is not far away. WGMS' current broadcast license expires in October of this year, and at that time the FCC will routinely review their application for renewal.

As part of that review process, the Commission will not only bring out all complaint letters which might have accumulated in the WGMS file as a result of the station's current plans, but the commissioners will also be obliged to consider any formal petitions for a denial of WGMS' request for renewal.

I asked Mr. Forker if he thought anyone might form a group which would petition the FCC for award of WGMS' 570 AM spot in order to continue classical programming there. "If they do, and they expect to make enough money on it to stay on the air, I certainly wish them the best of luck," he said.

WHAT YOU CAN DO :

If you are angry at WGMS and wish to complain, your complaint will do the most good if it is addressed to: FCC, Broadcast Bureau, 1919 'M' Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.

If you are positively outraged with WGMS and also feel lucky enough to successfully operate an AM classical station in Washington then you can file a "competeing application" for the 570 position on the AM band. The only essential prerequisite is that you be a citizen of the United States. To be considered, your application must be in the FCC's hands by midnight, September 1, 1972. Write the Broadcast Bureau and request forms and instructions for filing a new station license application, AM commercial.

If you have never heard of WGMS and would like to know what this is all about, you can hear them on 570AM or 103.5 FM.

If you support WGMS, you should write to them directly. Letters of support will help them immensely if their application for renewal goes into hearings. Address your letters to: WGMS AM-FM, 5100 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

If you object to the editorial policy of The Evening Star, as regards this (or any other matter), you can write and tell them at: The Editor, The Evening Star, 225 Virginia Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. Letters of praise will also be accepted at that address.

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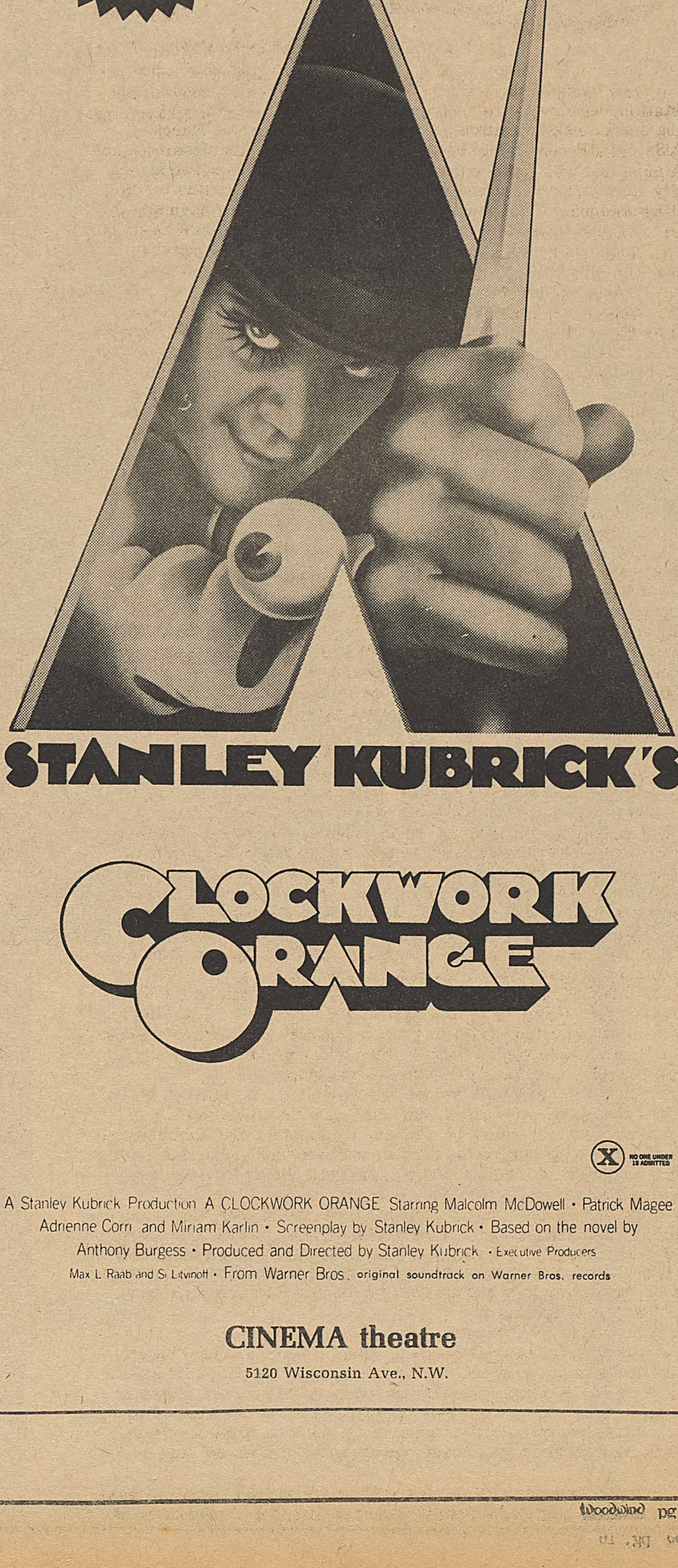

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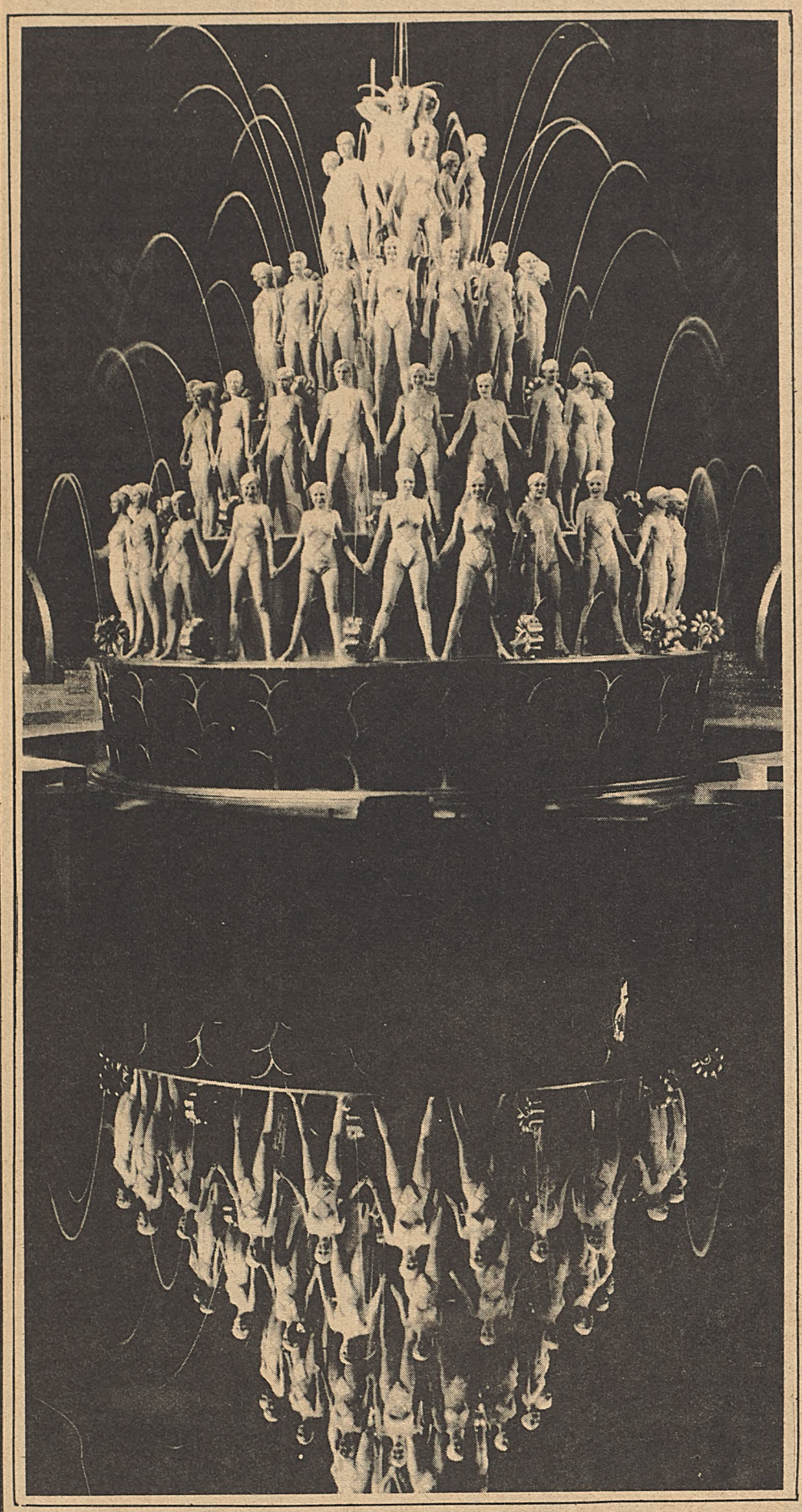
# at the movies



THE BOYFRIEND

Unfortunately, The Boyfriend is a dissapointing flop. Ken Russell, the director, has been one of my main men since he made Women In Love, but lately he's been failing me. The Devils, his last movie before The Boyfriend, was also not so great, but it was at least weird enough to convince me that I liked it. With The Boyfriend, I could eke out only the tiniest bit of affection and that was only because a few of the actors he always uses were excellent, as they always are. That's one thing about a Ken Russell film -- it's old home week on the screen every time. Every actor in all his other films seems to make an appearence at some time. Since most of them don't seem to change their characters much, in the more boring parts (almost all of The Boyfriend) you can sit and try to remember what movie you saw them in before. This, though, is small consolation.

The movie was taken from a stage play that was a nostalgia revival and it all seems a bit third hand by now. It's a movie made for the campness of a play made for the nostalgianess of movies and lays that were in themselves a unique type that don't seem to bear nder this type of re-hash. Most of all, Ken Russell doesn't m to be the man to even attempt such a project.

The movie stars, as you all probably know by now, Twiggy, who turns out to be an innoffensive kind of actress, is neither good nor particularly bad, but only very skinny. She does have the edge over practically everybody else in that department, thinness, but that, alone, just isn't enough to drag this movie out of the doldrums.

The plot itself isn't worth mentioning as the plots of the original thrities musicals weren't worth mentioning either being only vehicles for the amazing dance numbers. And, in The Boyfriend, Russell proves himself to be no match for Busby Berkeley. The numbers are all a bit tired looking with neither the sheer numbers of personnel nor the general pazazz of the originals. The precision footwork and the virtuoso camera work of Berkeley become uneven shuffling and uninspired camera tricks in Russell's hands, or feet. The film is saved from total loss by three of its actors. DeThrill, a sinister Hollywood director, zoot-suited and pencil mustached, whose every leer is a joy is played by the homosexual king of The Devils. The theatre owner's wife, played by Oliver Reed's mad mother in Women In Love, is still straight from Bedlam, and the only newcomer to the scene, Tommy Tune, plays a tap dancing kid who taps his way right into your heart. Very fine work by the three of them, but it's not enough to save it. Let's hope that Ken Russell does a little better next time.

MUSICAL REVIVAL AT THE A. F. I.

In contrast to Russell's The Boyfriend, the AFI is giving us the real thing with their Thirties Musicals series running through February 14. Having seen many of these movies on television as a youth, I expected little more than mild amusement. The nostalgia value was obviously absent, being as how I wasn't even breathing until the mid forties, much less attending movies. What I did get was a sense of freshness absent from most present day films and an overall impression of the total weirdness of these spectacles. We could sit here and sling bullshit all day about how these were depression times in real life and total fantasy in the movies, but that's an obvious comparison that doesn't seem to have much point. I think it's more useful to try to see them just as movies, without all the sociology. The major factor for me was the difference of seeing these films on television and in a theatre. Television by its own televisionness, seems to parody these films by shrinking them down to miniature box size and robbing them of their sense of spectacle which comes across so well on the screen. The spectacle itself, then, is what's important. The plots of most of the musicals are tired and tearworn, but they're only secondary, anyway, to the truly fantastic song and dance numbers. If you're really into films, you should probably try to see them all, but just catching one or two of the nights should be enough to get the idea. Besides, there's a real danger of O.D.ing on too many of these films. The emphasis, necessarily, is on Busby Berkeley, the King of the Song and Dance. Berkeley was brought to Hollywood by Samuel Goldwyn in 1930, from Broadway. In 1931, he left MGM and moved to Warners where he made most of his movies as director of dance sequences. Though he directed other complete films, these early ones were his finest. In 1933, he made Roman Scandles, Footlight Parade, 42nd Street, and Gold Diggers of '33. Not a bad year for Busby Berkeley. One of the best of the lot, Gold Diggers of 1933, is being shown Tuesday, Feb. 8. This movie showcases Berdeley in all his splendor and has almost, if not all, the elements of the thirties musical. The most surprising piece for me was an extremely strong anti-war-government number at the end of the film. The song told about the war veterans who couldn't find work, "You gave him a gun, what're you going to give him now?", and showed hundreds of soldiers going to war, being wounded, and standing in bread lines after the war. The whole sequence was extremely strong.

The last film of the series, Sunnysideup, is also very good. The first musical comedy written directly for the screen, I found it fresh and completely un-self-conscious. The most amazing song and dance was the incredible "Turn On The Heat". I quote Elliott Stein:

"This big production number is the crowning act at a society ball given at hero Farrell's Long Island estate. When the curtain rises, several hundred Eskimo girls, tucked in fur coats, emerge from their polar igloos and begin to sing, bump, and grind. This stimulating performance melts igloos and glaciers; an oozy quicksand forms of what might be reasonably described as yogurt lava. As the choreines warble, wiggle, and start to strip, things get even more torrid: palm trees sprout up from the lava, the landscape turns tropical, giant bananas burgeon between shapely legs; steam starts hissing from the yogurt, the entire set catches fire and the girls finally save themselves by diving into the swimming pool." All in all, I found it a mind boggling sequence.

The schedule for the series is: Tuesday, Feb. 8, Gold Diggers of 1933; Feb. 9, The Merry Widow (Maurice Chevalier and Jeannette MacDonald); Feb. 10, Dames (Ruby Keeler, Joan Blondell, and Dick Powell) also Wonder Bar starring Al Jolson and Dolores Del Rio; Love Me Tonight, Saturday, Feb. 12, again starring Maurice Chevalier and Jeannette MacDonald; Sunday, Feb. 13, is Swingtime which is probably the best Fred Astair - Ginger Rogers film. Those kids sure could dance; and Monday, Feb. 14, Sunnysideup with the above described "Turn On The Heat" number. Next Thursday (the 10th) is Valparaiso, Valparaiso, a modern French film that is part of an also current series at the AFI.

Reviewed by Allen Appel

# MUSIC

Reviewed by Susan Cohn

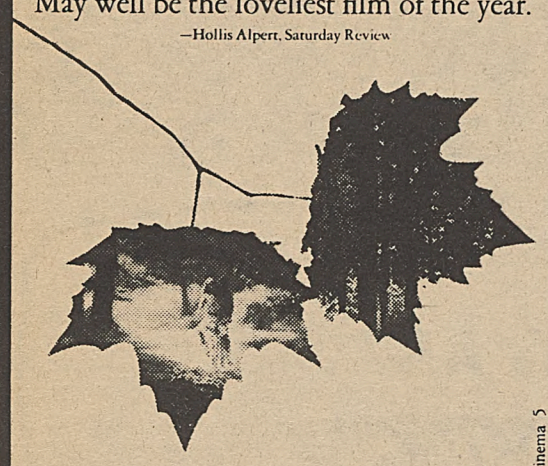
Szymsia Bajour, a Polish violinist who now resides in Argentina, brought his warm violin sound to the Pan American Union on Wednesday, February 2nd, and gave a very professional and very musical recital. I must admit that I am not the most sympathetic listener at violin recitals: I hate violin music, as a rule, but Mr. Bajour was able to please even me. (I'm always so surprised when I actually enjoy a solo violin.)

The program was opened with the Vitali-Charlier "Chaconne", a set of variations built on a descending bass line. The first measure was shaky, but Mr. Bajour quickly recovered and performed authoritatively, his tone warm, without that vibrato sometimes so wide that it sounds like a trill, and precisely on pitch. Beethoven's Sonata No. 6 in A Major, the next work, never really caught hold until the third movement. The sonata's problems were not lack of preparation or poor musicianship, but that horrible cosmic thing that sometimes happens in performance -- the planets are in conjunction or something is not approved by the gods, but no matter what the piece is just not going to "feel" right to the performer, and the only thing he can do (he can't stop and start again) is grit his teeth and play as best he can. Happily, the violinist stopped struggling and was able to perform the third movement with grace.

The second half of the program opened with the J.S. Bach Partita No. 3 in E Major for unaccompanied violin, and Bajour treated the audience to the most exquisitely played double stops, so perfect that at times it sounded as if two separate violins were being played, instead of just one. Castro's "Entrata y Danza Rustica", an aggressive twentieth-century piece, followed the Bach. This dance was the kind of piece that if I had happened on it, on a record, I'd immediately put the needle back on the disk and hear the work over again. Shostakovich's "Four Preludes" were next, the pieces originally written for piano during the war years and which I prefer for piano. The performance ended with Ravel's "Tzigane", a bravura piece which opens with a long, cadenza-like solo. Mr Bajour handled the piece with alacrity, but perhaps I was tired, for some of the possible sparkling passages seemed worn out. The audience was impressed, however, and applauded until the artist returned to the stage with de Falla's "Polka", a piece that seems designed for encores.

Mr. Bajour was accompanied by Robert Parris, the local harpsichordist and composer who is the perfect pianist: heard, but not listened to, a true accompanist, not overshadowing or competing with the soloist. As a violinist, Mr. Bajour performs with authority and with a great deal of talent. Even this violin-hater would like to hear him again.


May well be the loveliest film of the year.
—Hollis Alpert, Saturday Review



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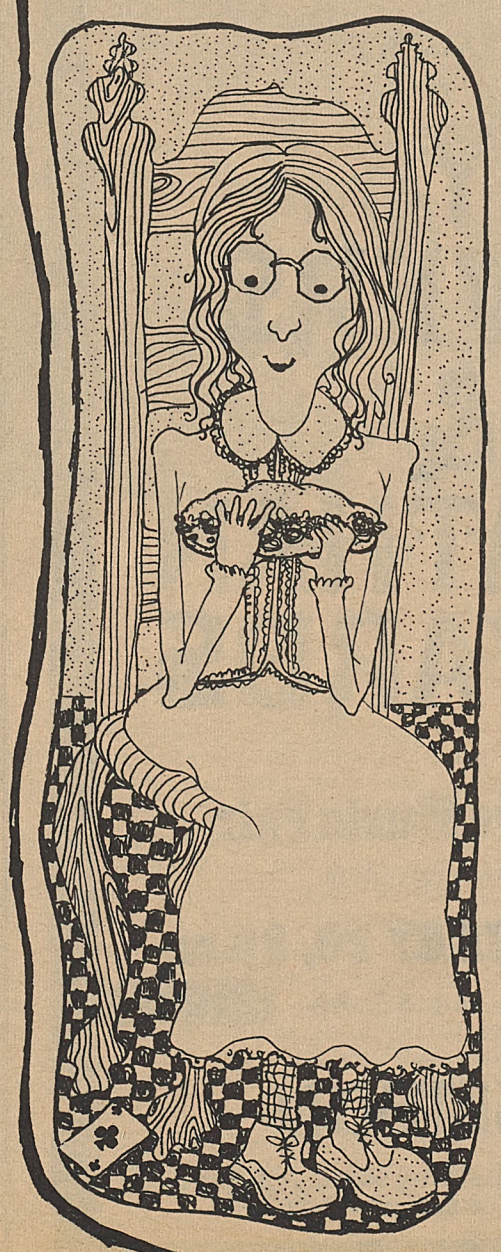

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